THE THIRD DAY.

20th November, 1907.

The Assembly met at 11 A. M. on Wednesday, the 20th November.

The Dewan addressed the Assembly as follows:—

Gentlemen,—Before we begin the work of this day, I have a matter to mention to you. I told you yesterday that it was the intention of Government to appoint a small Committee to investigate and report on the question of the present working of the system of inheritance and rights of property among certain classes following the Marumakkathayom system. For the present, the enquiry will be restricted to Samanthas and Nairs. The Committee will consist of five gentlemen. Government will be glad if the members of this Assembly, who are Samanthas or Nairs, will meet under the presidency of the Chief Secretary to Government and select three names for submission to Government. We shall consider those names in making appointments to the Committee.

SUBJECTS.

The consideration of general subjects was resumed.

IV. Public Works.

42. Maintenance of irrigation works.

Mr. C. Krishna Iyer (Member, Nedumangad Taluk) thought that irrigation tanks should be maintained without being allowed to be encroached upon by the people and that provision should be made for the repair of such tanks, channels and canals. He referred to the absence of irrigation works especially in his Taluk, to the registry in the names of private individuals of tank beds and sites useful for agricultural purposes, to the decline in agricultural stock and to the suffering the ryots and their cattle were being put to owing to the want of an adequate supply of water. He said that lands now lying unregistered should be maintained as such, and lands not registered at the time of the ayacut, but wrongly registered since, should be restored to their former condition.

Mr. P. C. Krishna Pillai (Member, Vaikam Taluk) urged the proper conservation of the *atta chiras* in his Taluk which were being encroached upon to the detriment of the progress of cultivation, and the obligation of Government in repairing and protecting irrigation works.

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SUBJECTS.

He referred to the policy proposed to be pursued by Government till the completion of the Kodayar works, alluded to in the Dewan's Address, as involving hardship and injustice to other Taluks, and requested Government to re-consider the decision.

Mr. P. Parameswaran Pillai (Member, Pattanapuram Taluk) said that there were no irrigation tanks and chiras in his Taluk, that cultivation depended on springs fed by rain-water, that crops frequently failed and that remissions were not being granted. He requested that an enquiry be made as to whether irrigation tanks had existed before and through whose neglect they ceased to exist, and that orders be given to restore them to their former condition. He further prayed that small low channels adjoining Elais be raised and small dams constructed in a few places so that they might be used to irrigate the Elais.

Dewan's reply.—In regard to the encroachments on the chiras referred to by the member from the Vaikam Taluk, I understand from the Chief Engineer that there are many encroachments like that. We shall enquire into the matter.

In regard to irrigation works, I find that these are now being maintained by Government only in south Travancore and in the Shencottah Taluk. The practice in regard to these Taluks appears to be for the Public Works department to maintain the more important works. We shall continue that practice.

The proposal made by the last speaker that we should now try to work back to the state of affairs that existed probably 50 years ago, and] restore all old tanks and maintain them is, I fear, impracticable. Wherever there are tanks, if they are of sufficient importance and if you bring them to notice, Government will enquire into their condition, and if for a reasonable amount they can be set right, we shall try to restore them. But a large number of small tanks cannot be taken up indiscriminately and money expended on them as suggested.

43. Beds of irrigation tanks, rendered unnecessary by the Kodayar Project, not to be sold.

Mr. S. Ramasubramony Iyer (Member, Agricultural Improvement Association, Nagercoil) said that the agricultural population of south Travancore viewed with great concern the proposal of Government to auction the beds of irrigation tanks reported to have been rendered unnecessary by the Kodayar Project works. The sale of the tank beds was not an uninportant matter but a complex and difficult

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